

SITUATION REPORT NO. 1
INCIDENT NO. 97-015
DATE: MARCH 6, 1997 TIME: 12:00 P.M.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring flood statewide.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: None reported at this time.
3. DAMAGES: The National Weather Service recently released "Spring Snowmelt Flood Outlook" reports call for flooding throughout the state. The threat of flooding ranges from minor to moderate in the west to severe in the east, where flood waters are expected to exceed record levels. The National Weather Service bases its forecasts on present snow cover and the assumption that normal precipitation will occur this spring.

Locations where record-level flooding is expected to occur include: the Red River at Wahpeton in the southeast and Grand Forks and Pembina in the northeast; the Park River at Grafton; the Pembina River at Walhalla and Neche; the Maple River at Enderlin and Mapleton; and the Sheyenne River at Kindred, Harwood and the Sheyenne Diversion at West Fargo. Additionally, locations where flood waters could rise to within inches of record flooding include: the Red River at Fargo and Drayton; the Wild Rice River at Abercrombie; and the Sheyenne River at Valley City and Lisbon.

The National Weather Service forecasts indicate that Devils Lake could rise approximately 2.5 feet to 1,440.5 feet MSL, one-half foot shy of its 1830 record level of 1,441 feet MSL. This fifth year of flooding in the Devils Lake Basin further threatens transportation and utility systems, private and public property, and public safety and health.

River levels, within North Dakota, first rose above flood stage on February 24 when spring runoff from Montana caused the Missouri River at Williston to crest at 23.3 feet. Flood stage is 20 feet. The runoff flowed over the river's ice into river bottoms and back channels. Since cresting, the river level has gradually decreased. The level on March 5 was 20.5 feet, one-half foot above flood stage.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: Participants in flood preparedness measures include county commissions, county road departments, tribal councils, tribal road departments, city councils and commissions, city public works departments, county sheriff's offices, city police department, county emergency management agencies, county social services agencies and school officials. Communities are stockpiling supplies and are preparing equipment resources for potential flood fight activities.

STATE: Representatives of the Governor's Office, State Radio Communications, N.D. State Water Commission, N.D. National Guard, N.D. Game and Fish Department, N.D. Division of Emergency Management, N.D. Department of Health, Office of Intergovernmental Assistance, N.D. Human Services, N.D. Highway Patrol and N.D. Department of Transportation are participating in flood preparedness activities and meetings.

FEDERAL: The National Weather Service continues efforts to monitor the spring flood potential. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has provided technical assistance for flood preparedness efforts.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTIONS: In preparation for spring flooding, the Salvation Army initiated "Operation -- We Care," a toll-free emergency hotline number for volunteers and fund raising. Volunteer recruitment and training will be scheduled in Bismarck, Valley City, Devils Lake, Cavalier, Grand Forks, Fargo and Lisbon.

Pembina County Social Services is compiling a list of volunteers for sandbagging efforts and for Salvation Army and American Red Cross assistance.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Governor Schafer issued a statewide emergency on February 28 to help facilitate preparation for spring flooding. The governor's Proclamation is based on flood forecasts from the National Weather Service, thick ice cover that threatens to generate ice jams on rivers and tributaries, excessive fall and early winter precipitation on already saturated lands, and reports from state and local emergency management officials.

Governor Schafer issued an Executive Order activating the North Dakota Emergency Operations Plan to help support planning, mitigation and response efforts of local officials. Measures that state and local resources have been involved with and will continue to pursue include: identifying and prioritizing key facilities and structures in harm's way; relocation and/or elevation of structures; site specific planning; abandonment and/or elevation of transportation routes and facilities; temporary diking measures; and water storage measures.

In preparation for flooding, Governor Schafer has requested assistance from the Omaha District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), to reduce flooding along the James River. Assistance was requested to clear the James River channel between the Second Street SW and Third Street NW bridges, and install channel blocks to the right bank downstream of Jamestown Dam and on both ends of the Oxbow area, located on the James River in southeastern Jamestown.

Jamestown city officials are using 1996 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)/State recovery funds to remove the two box culverts in the James River. These culverts were part of the First Street Bridge that has since been removed. The funds were designated for repair of the bridge.

The N.D. Division of Emergency Management plans to submit an application to FEMA Region VIII for potential funding for measures designed to reduce or eliminate ice jams on the Red River. A combination of four mitigation measures will be used, including mulch, sand, sand and salt mixture, and ice auguring.

Ramsey County Rural Utility System has requested assistance for elevating lift stations and man hole covers, which are threatened by rising Devils Lake waters.

A representative of the USACE inspected dikes and provided assistance on February 27 to officials in the cities of Pembina and Neche. Officials are concerned the dikes are too soft.

State agencies have coordinated extensive public information campaigns to encourage flood preparedness measures. Special flood preparedness training and public officials' conferences are being conducted throughout the state.

In response to the spring flood potential, FEMA, the State Water Commission and the N.D. Division of Emergency Management participated in an educational campaign to promote participation by communities and their residents in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

The Governor's Office and the N.D. Division of Emergency Management staffs recently prepared flood-preparedness articles for the League of Cities, N.D. Association of Counties, N.D. Rural Electric Cooperatives magazine, N.D. Fire Chiefs Association, N.D. Peace Officers Association, The Ag Farm and News Network, and a monthly Emergency Medical Health Services video produced by the N.D. Department of Health.

The Omaha District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) will be conducting flood preparedness meetings. Representatives of the USACE, N.D. Division of Emergency Management, National Weather Service and the N.D. National Guard will participate in the meetings. The meeting schedule is as follows:

Date and Time	City	Location
March 10, 1 p.m.	Williston	County Courthouse, Memorial Room, 205 Broadway East
March 11, 1 p.m.	Bismarck	Bismarck Law Enforcement Center, 700 S. 9th St.
March 20, 12 p.m.	Minot	City Council Chambers

The St. Paul District of the USACE has already conducted meetings in Wahpeton, Fargo, Valley City and Grand Forks.

Emergency declarations have been issued by the city of Jamestown and Walsh County.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: The next "Spring Snowmelt Flood Outlook" will be issued by the National Weather Service on March 14.

The N.D. Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports for the spring flood, Devils Lake flood and winter storm are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>".

Raymond J. Staiger, Acting State Director